

Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees

Checklist of Best Practices

Before the Search

GOOD:

- Clearly articulate campus rationale for support of faculty racial and ethnic diversity by making explicit the connections between faculty diversity and educational quality.
- Create a search committee that is enthusiastic and genuinely committed to faculty diversity.
- Develop and distribute a departmental statement outlining meaningful steps to be taken to achieve greater diversity among the student body and faculty, drawing on your department's Diversity Appraisal self-evaluation.

BETTER:

In addition to the above:

- Create a diverse search committee, comprised of faculty, administrators, and students from both minority and non-minority backgrounds, that brings multiple perspectives and fresh ideas to bear.
- Include and align commitment to diversity efforts in the institutional and departmental strategic plans, as well as the mission statement.
- Create open lines of communication with potential faculty already in your department or school, such as adjunct or part-time professors, graduate students, and research associates.

BEST:

In addition to all of the above:

- Secure all resources needed to conduct a comprehensive search – for example, to place job announcements in minority-serving publications.
- Make sure that your campus has developed and continually audits a comprehensive plan to address and show a commitment to diversity in every area of campus life, including faculty hiring, curricular reform, student enrollment, campus activities, and general campus climate.
- Establish and cultivate ongoing and routine relationships with local and national minority organizations and special interest groups, as well as with students and faculty at colleges and universities that educate graduate students of color.
- Incorporate new research findings and data about faculty of color into the everyday practices of our institution, such as convene information forums, roundtables, retreats, presenting emerging research and successful practices.

During the Search

GOOD:

- Make sure that the search committee understands its charge from the onset, clearly emphasizing that faculty diversity is a goal and that I-200 does not preclude actively seeking a diverse pool of candidates.
- Critically analyze the job description and advertisement, making sure that they are geared towards inclusiveness.
- Mail/email position announcements to minority groups and organizations, such as those listed in the back of *Diversifying the Faculty* guidebook (pp. 33-6) and attached to this checklist.
- Cover the costs of the candidate's expenses related to the interview, including hotel, food, and travel expenses.
- During the campus visit, make sure that all interactions with the candidate are honest, genuine, and gracious.
- Offer to make available a person of similar background, interests, ethnicity, or gender to give their perspectives on the campus and local community climate.

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BETTER:

In addition to the above:

- Write a position description that attracts a diverse group of applicants, making sure that it clearly states that inclusiveness and diversity are departmental and institutional goals.
- Make personal contact by letter or phone to faculty of color, visiting scholars, and/or individuals who have made diversity-related presentations on campus.
- Establish a vita bank.
- Use listserves, bulletins boards, and other forms of technology to announce positions and recruit potential candidates far and wide.

BEST:

In addition to all of the above:

- Educate the search committee and provide opportunities for discussion on diversity and equity issues, including Affirmation Action and I-200 rules and regulations, hiring myths, stereotypes, and biases.
- Utilize personal and professional networks, contacts, and recommendations to seek leads to potential minority candidates.
- Initiate recruitment trips to universities which prepare a significant number of minority Ph.D. graduates.
- Incorporate recruitment networking into professional conference attendance by department faculty.
- Establish a pool of potential minority candidates through a Visiting Scholars and/or ABD Fellowship programs.
- Advise the candidate of any incentives that might be negotiable in the salary package (reduced work-loads, grant-funded opportunities, etc.)
- Cover the cost of an additional campus/area visit to explore housing.

After the Search

GOOD:

- Honor all start-up conditions mentioned in the final letter of agreement.
- Do not overload the new hire with excessive service demands, such as committee memberships, advising, etc.

BETTER:

In addition to the above:

- Follow-up with the new hire regularly to help with transitions and to answer any concerns that might develop in the first few days/weeks/months.
- Provide mentoring and professional development opportunities.

BEST:

In addition to all of the above:

- Continue efforts to diversify the faculty and other campus diversity initiatives.
- Provide the new hire with clearly stated standards and procedures regarding evaluation and performance.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the search process in order to avoid future missteps; acknowledge the successes and failures and share that information with future search committees.
- Sponsor campus and community-wide gatherings to highlight the research, teaching, and service contributions of hired faculty of color.

(Adapted from *Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees* by Caroline Turner (2002), pp. 31-2)